

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 EUR-25

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 DPW-01 IO-12 RSR-01 SR-02

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O 231035 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2056

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9077

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL SITREP MR I MAY 23 1973

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM AMCONSUL DANANG DATED MAY 23
IS REPEATED HERE FOR YOUR ACTION/ INFO:

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 0571

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT VS

SUBJECT: CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL SITREP MR I, X PLUS 115, MAY 23,
1973

1. SECURITY SITUATION:

ACTIVITY DECREASED IN MR I WITH ONLY TEN CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS
REPORTED, MADE UP OF TWO GROUND ATTACKS, SEVEN ATTACKS BY FIRE
(ABF) (320 MORTAR ROUNDS), AND ONE TERRORISM INCIDENT. ACTION
NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS WAS EXTREMELY LIGHT WITH ONLY TWO ABFS
REPORTED SOUTHWEST OF VEGEL WHERE THE FIRST BATTALION, 51 ST
REGIMENT, RECEIVED 250 MORTAR ROUNDS . REGION- WIDE, CASUALTIES
WERE: FRIENDLY 4 KIA, 1 MIA, 37 WIA; ENEMY 12 KIA, 8 CAPTURED,
1 RETURNEE. FRIENDLY ARTILLERY FIRED A LOW OF 1,032 ROUNDS;
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261 (A NEW LOW) NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, 771 SOUTH.

2. GVN MILITARY ACTIVITIES:

THUA THIEN PROVINCE CHIEF, COLONEL TON THAT KHIEM, HAS DISCUSSED HIS PLANS FOR TERRITORIAL FORCES FOR PERIOD MAY TO JULY WITH DIRECTOR ARRO HUE. AS BACKGROUND, COLONEL KHIEM SAID HE FELT THE ENEMY NO LONGER HAS INTENTIONS TO CONDUCT MAJOR OFFENSIVES IN THE NEAR FUTURE BUT RATHER INTENDS TO CONSOLIDATE HIS HOLDINGS IN WESTERN MR I. IN THIS REGARD, HE REFERRED TO A PRG ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP A " THIRD VIETNAM." HE INTERPRETED THE ARTILLERY ATTACKS ON THE CO CI AREA NORTHWEST OF HUE AND KIM QUY TO THE WEST OF HUE AS BEING MAINLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAINTAINING PRESSURE AGAINST ARVN FORCES TO CONSOLIDATE AND PROTECT HIS OWN EFFORTS RATHER THAN INTENSIVE PROBES PREPARATORY TO MAJOR OFFENSIVE MOVES. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, KHIEM IS CONCENTRATING ON IMPROVED TRAINING FOR REGIONAL FORCES (RF) AND INTENDS TO UTILIZE POPULAR FORCES (PF) AND PEOPLES SELF- DEFENSE FORCES (PSDF) ELEMENTS IN A CIVIC ACTION ROLE. IN PARTICULAR, HE PLANS TO USE THEM TO CLEAR AND PLOW FIELDS IN LESS SECURE AREAS WHERE THEY CAN BOTH PROVIDE MANPOWER AND SECURITY AT THE SAME TIME. IN CONNECTION WITH THIS, HE IS ALSO EMPHASIZING CONSTRUCTION OF FEEDER ROADS TO THE EAST AND WEST OF ROUTE 1.

3. ICCS ACTIVITY:

ON MAY 21 AN EIGHT MEMBER ICCS INVESTIGATING TEAM FROM CHU LAI VISITED THI PHO HAMLET IN MO DUC DISTRICT (BS 722577) TO INVESTIGATE THE MAY 13 ENEMY MORTAR ATTACK IN WHICH TWO PF SOLDIERS WERE KILLED. THE INVESTIGATION HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SCHEDULED FOR MAY 17 BUT WAS POSTPONED AT THE REQUEST OF GVN OFFICIALS SO AS NOT TO INTERFERE WITH BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS. AS ON PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS, THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS CHALLENGED MUCH OF THE TESTIMONY GIVEN BY WITNESSES IN RESPONSE TO THE ICCS'S QUESTIONS. OF THE THREE EXPLOSIONS THAT REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE INSIDE THE PF OUTPOST ON MAY 13, THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS ALLEGED THAT ONE HAD BEEN CAUSED BY A MORTAR ROUND OF U. S. MANUFACTURE AND THAT A SECOND HAD NOT BEEN CAUSED BY A MORTAR AT ALL.

4. NON- GVN POLITICAL ACTIVITY:

POLOFF HUE REPORTS THAT MOST POLITICAL PARTIES ARE CONTINUING TO FLY FLAGS IN HUE IN SPITE OF DL 060 IMPLEMENTATION. NGUYEN NGOC CU, CHIEF OF THE REVOLUTIONARY DAI VIET PARTY (AND CONCURRENTLY

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CHIEF OF RD CADRE), TOLD POLOFF THAT HIS PARTY WILL CONTINUE TO FUNCTION IN SPITE OF DL 060 AND WILL GO UNDERGROUND IF NECESSARY.

5. BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

THE FOLLOWING LATE REPORT WAS RECEIVED FROM QUANG NGAI POLOFF: AN QUANG LEADERS IN QUANG NGAI CLAIM THAT THIS YEAR'S BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, THOUGH MODEST BY COMPARISON WITH THOSE IN

DANANG AND HUE, WERE THE LARGEST IN RECENT MEMORY. BUDDHISTS TOOK ADVANTAGE OF IMPROVED SECURITY TO HOLD TWO RATHER IMPRESSIVE NIGHT PROCESSIONS THROUGH QUANG NGAI CITY AND ALONG QL-1 TO TU NGHIA DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS. IN COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS YEARS, THE ADDRESSES GIVEN BY AN QUANG VENERABLES AT WELL ATTENDED CEREMONIES THROUGHOUT THE THREE- DAY CELEBRATION WERE REMARKABLY FREE OF POLITICAL RHETORIC AND CARRIED NONE OF THE FAMILIAR LITTANY OF AN QUANG RECRIMINATIONS AGAINST THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT. IN STEAD AN QUANG SPOKESMEN CONFINED THEMSELVES TO EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE THAT THIS WILL BE THE YEAR IN WHICH TRUE PEACE COMES TO VIETNAM. PRIVATELY, HOWEVER, AN QUANG LEADERS DISPLAYED LITTLE OPTIMISM ABOUT THE PROSPECTS THAT THE MUCH VIOLATED CEASEFIRE CAN BE MADE TO WORK OR THAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN ALTER ITS MORAL CHARACTER SUFFICIENTLY TO RALLY THE PEOPLE EVEN TO THE CAUSE OF THEIR OWN DEFENSE.

BROWN
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